

Message Text

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D/HA/ORM: SLOMAN

S/S: MR. SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

USINT BAGHDAD PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 209897

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR AND PRINCIPAL OFFICER KILLOUGH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IZ, IR

SUBJECT: BARZANI PROBLEM

1. BARZANI APPARENTLY HAS RECEIVED MESSAGES FROM IRANIAN AUTHORITY THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER INSISTENT THAT HE RETURN PROMPTLY TO TEHRAN AS ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED. A MEMBER OF BARZANI'S ENTOURAGE INFORMS US THAT SHAH HAD IN EFFECT CONVEYED WORD THROUGH SAVAK CHANNEL TO BARZANI THAT HE, BARZANI, WOULD BE WELCOME TO COME TO TEHRAN AT ANY TIME AND THAT, IF HE WISHED TO RETURN TO THE U.S. FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT IN THE FUTURE, THERE WOULD BE NO OBSTACLE. THE SAVAK ESCORT OFFICER HAS RETURNED TO TEHRAN.

2. MEANWHILE, BARZANI AND HIS ENTOURAGE HAVE MOVED TO LOWER-PRICED QUARTERS IN AN APARTMENT HOTEL AND REPORTEDLY

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HAVE BEEN LOOKING AROUND FOR A LEASED OR RENTED HOUSE

IN THE WASHINGTON AREA.

3. AT LEAST THREE MEMBERS OF THE BARZANI ENTOURAGE, INCLUDING ONE OF HIS SONS, WOULD LIKE TO RETURN TO IRAN OR BE REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES ELSEWHERE. BARZANI'S PERSONAL PHYSICIAN, DR. OMRANI, FOR EXAMPLE, TELLS US HE WISHES TO GO TO LONDON SHORTLY TO BE REUNITED WITH HIS WIFE

AND CHILD, WHO WILL BE TRAVELING THERE UNDER IRANIAN PASSPORTS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE OMRANIS MAY THEN RETURN TO WASHINGTON FOR AWHILE, BUT EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD LIKE TO SETTLE IN LONDON, SO THAT THE DOCTOR CAN CONTINUE HIS MEDICAL STUDIES AND PERHAPS ENTER PRACTICE THERE.

4. DESPITE THESE SIGNS OF RESTLESSNESS, WE CAN TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE BARZANI ENTOURAGE WILL REMAIN COMPLETELY LOYAL TO THEIR LEADER AND WILL STAY WITH HIM IF THIS IS HIS DESIRE.

5. BARZANI'S OBJECTIVES--OTHER THAN TO STAY IN THE U.S. FOR AWHILE--ARE NOT WHOLLY CLEAR. BARZANI TOLD NEA/ARN COUNTRY DIRECTOR THAT HE WAS INCLINED TO ENDORSE KURDISH ACCEPTANCE OF THE RECENT IRAQI OFFER OF AN AMNESTY TO THE KURDS REMAINING IN IRAN (TEHRAN 7872) PROVIDED IT COULD BE CONFIRMED THAT THE KURDS WOULD BE RELOCATED IN THE NORTH IN THE GENERALLY KURDISH AREAS IN WHICH THEY HAD ONCE LIVED, BORDER AREAS EXCEPTED. BARZANI RATHER ELIPTICALLY INDICATED THAT, IF HE ENDORSED THIS AMNESTY OFFER, HE WOULD HAVE DONE ABOUT AS MUCH FOR THE KURDISH REFUGEES IN IRAN AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED AT THIS TIME; HENCEFORTH HE WOULD CONCENTRATE HIS ATTENTION ON TRYING TO INFLUENCE THE IRAQI REGIME TO RETURN TO SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF THE MARCH 1970 AGREEMENT.

6. OUR VIEW IS THAT WE CAN AFFORD TO TAKE A WAIT-AND-SEE POSITION FOR AWHILE. BARZANI'S STAY IN THE U.S. HAS RESULTED IN A FEW PRESS STORIES BUT THEY HAVE GOTTEN RELATIVELY LITTLE ATTENTION. WE FEEL WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO APPLY PRESSURE TO HIM OF THE KIND THAT MIGHT FORCE HIM

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TO SEEK HELP FROM SOME OF HIS FRIENDS HERE, OR RAISE AN OUTCRY IN THE PRESS. THE RESULT MIGHT WELL BE AN APPLICATION FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM, FOR WHICH HE HAS A STRONG PRIMA FACIE CASE, AND WHICH WE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY IN REFUSING.

7. CONSEQUENTLY, WE HAVE ASKED INS TO EXTEND THE STAY OF BARZANI AND HIS ENTOURAGE FOR THREE MONTHS AND TO

ALLOW SOME MEMBERS OF THE ENTOURAGE, DR. OMRANI AND MUHSIN DESAI, TO VISIT LONDON AND RETURN.

8. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON DEALING WITH THE BARZANI PROBLEM, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PROBABLE ATTITUDES OF THE IRANIAN AND IRAQI AUTHORITIES. FOR AMB HELMS: WOULD PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE YOUR CLARIFICATION AS TO WHAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE SHAH AND THE

IRANIAN GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE TOWARDS A PROLONGED STAY BY BARZANI IN THE U.S. AND A POSSIBLE APPLICATION BY HIM FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM HERE. KISSINGER

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